

Connections

April 2007

Orange You Excited for the 2007 Construction Season?

by Megan Mills

MoDOT and other buildings across the state will be lit up in orange to raise awareness of National Work Zone Awareness Week, April 2-6. The week will kick off the 2007 construction season – the third straight year for record construction with 84 projects covering more than 735 miles of Missouri roadways.

The orange lights are just one way MoDOT is spreading awareness about work zone safety. Other efforts include billboards, television spots, radio advertisements, a statewide construction map and advertisements in non-traditional media. Most of the messages remain the same as years past, encouraging motorists to Drive Smart to Arrive Alive; however, this year the campaign is also sporting a new message – Watch Out for Us Out There.

This message focuses on worker safety, following the tragic death of MoDOT worker Ken Hoierman, who was an advocate of work zone safety and killed in a 2006 work zone.

“We hope that spreading awareness about Ken’s death will really encourage motorists to be more cautious when driving through work zones,” said Don Hillis, director of System Management. “We are

doing our part to make our work zones safer and smarter with new technology, brighter signs and workers who are prepared for what’s ahead. However, motor-



Shaun Schmitz

tion of the Smooth Road’s Initiative, MoDOT now plans to improve the remainder of the state’s 5,600 miles of major roadways. Called Better Roads, Brighter

opportunities for drivers to be distracted, making work zones dangerous places. Motorists and highway workers are injured and killed every year in work zones across the country, but hopefully by spreading awareness we can decrease these injuries and deaths.”



ists need to understand that they have to do their part and remember to always buckle up and drive smart in work zones.”

MoDOT will be engaged in another very busy construction season this year. Following the successful and early comple-

Future, the program will bring 85 percent of Missouri’s roadways up to good condition by the end of 2011

“Road improvements mean lots of work zones,” Hillis said. “More work zones mean more delays, frustrations and op-

Primary Seat Belt Legislation Moves Closer to Becoming Law

by Megan Mills

“On a cold February night many years ago, I got in a crash where I severed a telephone pole and rolled my car four times end over end. The contents of the car flew as far as thirty yards away [and] my car was smashed and battered... Inside that car, I lay, broken, and later paralyzed, but I lay there alive, secured in my seat by my safety belt.”

“There is no way I would be here today...or be able to care for the thousands of people across my community without the simple concept of fastening my safety belt.”

This chilling testimony was shared by Matthew Cushman, a paramedic and the director of EMS for Raytown. His was one of many testimonies presented to the House Transportation Committee in

February in support of House Bill 90, the primary seat belt legislation.

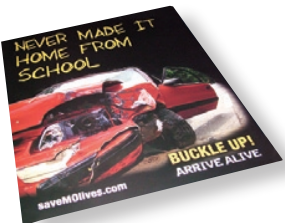
Even more supporters, including Rep. Neal St. Onge and MoDOT Director Pete Rahn, attended the Primary Seat Belt Rollout rally that took place immediately after the House Transportation Committee vote on Feb. 13.

“This is the year Missouri should buckle up and that starts with primary seat belt legislation,” said Rahn. “We are losing too many people who are not wearing seat belts and we have done as much as we can to get Missourians to buckle up without a primary seat belt law.”

Continued on page 2

Inside

6



A Powerful Message

Schools in District 1 come together to learn the dangers of driving impaired

8

In the Mix

Ensuring project quality is putting District 3 employees in the mix with regard to their jobs

12



Safe, Effective Work Zones

District 7 keeps a positive atmosphere during a busy construction project

13



Juranus Joins D8

New District Engineer has worked for MoDOT throughout the state

14



Getting the Season Started

Projects in District 9 are under way, as we observe Work Zone Awareness Week

Stopping Fraud, Waste and Abuse

by Patti Knopke

New fraud prevention posters are popping up everywhere inside MoDOT buildings. They are part of Audits and Investigations division’s effort to prevent fraud and waste of valuable and limited resources.

To support MoDOT’s value of receiving the best value for every dollar spent because we’re taxpayers too, AI has become more aggressive and proactive. As we enter into our busiest construction season ever, and see our revenues decreasing in the future, it is imperative that we protect MoDOT and taxpayer resources. AI works to assure taxpayers that MoDOT is a good steward of the funds and resources entrusted to it.

AI has set up a toll-free confidential hotline to report fraud and has developed an ethics and fraud briefing to educate employees.

These efforts are based on the following three-pronged proactive approach:

- 1) **Deterrence:** through fraud briefings and educating employees to help deter fraud, waste and abuse and identify inefficiencies that can drain valuable resources.



- 2) **Detection:** through reporting efforts, auditing and contract monitoring to identify fraud, waste and abuse.
- 3) **Investigation:** through actively and quickly investigating those incidents that have been reported or detected and seeking to help those accountable for illegal acts.

“The goal is not only finding fraud, but preventing the department and taxpayers from being victimized in the first place,” said Bill Rogers, director of Audits and Investigations. “It costs additional money and resources to investigate, recover and prosecute those involved in fraud and other illegal acts. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

For more information, contact Bill Rogers at 573-751-7446.

Primary Seat Belt

Continued from page 1

To prepare for the rally, the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety put together a phone tree and sent a mass e-mail to all Primary Safety Belt Partners asking them to contact their state representative about the issue prior to the debate. The rally was the last opportunity to show the legislators how much support there is for the legislation.

Those efforts paid off. House Bill 90 passed out of the House Transportation Committee that day. The next step takes place when all members of the House of Representatives debate the bill in the coming weeks. It will need 82 YES votes to pass the House and, if and when it does, the bill will be sent to the Senate.

In order to keep the momentum moving forward, the coalition held another rally March 6 in advance of the upcoming floor debate.

Empowering MoDOT Employees One Training Course At a Time

by Patti Knopke

MoDOT will empower employees because we trust them to make timely and innovative decisions.

In support of this value, MoDOT has engaged in a new training course titled Advanced Work Zone training, an extension of our Flagger Training and Work Zone Technician courses. While the Flagger Training and Work Zone Technician courses focus solely on the typical applications and most common scenarios for work zones, the new course focuses on the not-so-typical scenarios.

“When MoDOT released the Flagger Training and Work Zone Technician

courses in 2002, we knew we also wanted to develop a course that would provide designers, inspectors, field supervisors and management with the information they needed to make temporary traffic control decisions in work zones,” said Scott Stotlemeyer, traffic liaison engineer. “Thanks to the efforts of many district and Central Office staff who answered my call, we have now achieved that goal.”

The new day-and-a-half course gives participants the philosophies and knowledge necessary to build transportation plans, work with law enforcement and the media, identify work zone deficiencies and adapt a

traffic control plan to meet special needs. The course also satisfies the Federal Highway Administration rule that all work zones have a work zone specialist on site to make necessary changes and decisions based on varying factors.

“In late 2004 the FHWA enacted new rules requiring DOTs to provide work zone training for employees commensurate with their level of responsibility and calling for a work zone supervisor to be assigned to each project or operation,” Stotlemeyer said. “I’m happy to say MoDOT’s trio of work zone training courses fulfills these requirements. Now all we have to do is

get the right employees trained by the October 2007 deadline.”

To get the ball rolling, Scott and Senior Risk Management Specialist Jeff Lockwood trained 80 district staff members to be course trainers. Those trainers will in turn teach the course throughout the state. Most full-time employees in district maintenance, construction, design and traffic will be eligible to attend the new course. Specific attendance requirements will be determined by district staff.

For more information about Advanced Work Zone training, contact Scott Stotlemeyer at 573-526-1759.

Working Toward Improving Work Zones

by Megan Mills

With more than 1,000 work zones statewide again this year, MoDOT continues to improve practices and materials for better work zones. New safety vests, sign covers and flagger assistance devices will improve work zone safety and increase productivity.

New yellow safety vests with orange trim and silver reflective striping will improve daytime and nighttime visibility of workers in work zones.

“Hopefully these vests will decrease injuries and deaths of our workers,” said Scott Stotlemeyer, traffic liaison engineer. “Last year we lost two employees in work zone related crashes and we want to prevent that from happening again this year.”

District 10 is experimenting with new lightweight sign covers that are placed

over signs along the roadside that don’t apply in work zones. Past sign covers have caused damage to the sign face and often don’t fit the sign properly, causing them to come off. The new covers will eliminate these concerns in addition to providing a variety of other benefits.

“These new covers are great, they are stretchy and act like a sock conforming to the different size signs,” Stotlemeyer said. “This will improve safety because they will stay on the signs and will last longer.”

In addition, several districts are using automated flagger assistance devices to improve safety and increase efficiency in work zones by freeing up the workers that would usually flag to do other tasks.



New safety vests, like these worn by a District 10 bridge maintenance crew, will help make our workers more visible to motorists. From left to right: Senior Maintenance Worker Darren Knuckles, Senior Maintenance Worker Travis Stanback and Maintenance Specialist Brad Milam.

Take Our Children to Work Day

Mark your calendars – Thursday, April 26 is Take Our Children to Work Day. This event welcomes your child, grandchild, niece, nephew, or young friend to come to work with you and observe your typical workday. It’s a great opportunity for a child to see what you do and to possibly explore his or her own future career aspirations.

- Here are some basic guidelines to follow:
- Only children between the ages of 8 to 15 should be allowed to participate, with the advance approval of the employee’s supervisor.
 - Employees should prepare schedules, provide materials and arrange workspace for the children with

- the approval and assistance of their supervisors.
- Employees must have the appropriate manager’s approval before children can ride in state vehicles. Children must wear seat belts at all times in MoDOT vehicles.
- Employees will be responsible for the safety and control of their child.
- No expenditures are to be authorized for meals.
- MoDOT does not allow children to be on or near department equipment (such as lawn mowers, motor graders, etc.) when in operation.

Look for more details soon on specific district and Central Office events.

Remembering MoDOT Workers Killed in Work Zones

by Megan Mills

Despite our efforts to make them safe, people are still killed and injured in Missouri work zones every year. Last year 20 people were killed in Missouri work zones, including two of our own workers.

“To commemorate the MoDOT workers who have lost their lives in work zones we are adding a memorial page to our Web site this year,” said Don Hillis, director of System Management. “It is important for the public to understand the consequences of choosing not to Drive Smart in work zones.”

A team has been formed to develop other ways to commemorate those

employees who have lost their lives in a work zone crash, such as a more permanent memorial in Jefferson City.

Most work zone crashes are caused by inattention, excessive speed and following too closely. Since 2000, five MoDOT workers were killed in Missouri work zones.

Sixty-two MoDOT workers have been killed in a work zone by a motorist or piece of equipment since 1949.

“These folks killed in work zone crashes are gone, but definitely not forgotten,” Hillis said. Their names will be listed on the new memorial page.

Express To Success

Express to Success is changing the way Information Systems does business. Here are some E2S projects that have been implemented or are ready to launch.

Scorecard and Plan Management
The scorecard looks at various performance measures critical to IS and helps management and staff keep track of where they are in the big picture.

“The scorecard is analogous to what other divisions are doing with their D-Tracker,” explained Mike Miller, Director of IS. “But it also helps us direct our attention ahead of time. It’s a plan for us to evaluate where we are now and what we should be looking at in the future.”

Miller said that, in the technology industry, such a tool is often called a balanced scorecard because it helps balance the needs of an organization with available resources.

Single Point of Failure
Another aspect of E2S that’s in progress is the Single Point of Failure project. This effort reviews the duties and responsibilities of current IS staff and consultants and helps identify Single Points of Failure, individuals who are the exclusive holders of skills, information or knowledge. Having a single person as the soul owner of a task is not good for the organization or the individual. Often these employees can’t even take time off without being called into work for some routine task.

“Our drive is to eliminate this condition by identifying the key areas being affected and cross training individuals so that more than one person will know how to perform the task,” Miller said. “It’s not really rocket science.”

Information Lifecycle Management
How long should information be stored before it’s useless? What data’s survival is critical in the event of a disaster? Those are some of the questions ad-

dressed in the Information Lifecycle Management project of E2S.

“Some information needs to be stored longer than other information,” Miller said. “With ILM we will better spend our investment dollars for storage.”

Miller said that prioritizing data storage is a crucial aspect of E2S. Right now there are more than 11 terabytes of storage just for old MoDOT e-mails. Considering that most e-mails are only a few kilobytes, that represents millions of e-mails that are being stored for basically no reason at all.

“We don’t want a Dead Sea of information that flows in but never flows out again,” Miller said. “We want a Sea of Galilee where information enters and flows out again.”

Inferred Business Model
All aspects of E2S are based upon a basic understanding of MoDOT and how it does business. To serve the department, IS must have a strong grasp of what its partners do for the taxpayer.

“We have to be sure we’re aligned with the business of MoDOT,” Miller said. “Our effectiveness will only be as good as how well the solutions we deliver meet our partners needs.”

To ensure such alignment, E2S will create an Inferred Business Model of MoDOT. This is a graphic breakdown of each division and district with a list of services it provides the public and the department.

“We don’t want the model to show how MoDOT does business, we want it to show what business it does,” Miller said. “The model will give us the knowledge of MoDOT’s business so we can make sure that any work we plan to do for any one division or district is actually the best plan for all of MoDOT.”

We Want Your Opinion

In the past, focus groups have given excellent insight into how to improve *Connections*. This time, the *Connections* editorial board invites you

to share your opinions about MoDOT’s monthly newsletter by filling out this brief survey. Thanks for giving us your valuable time and opinions.

How often do you read *Connections* articles?

- ☐ Every month
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Every two or three months
- ☐ Never

What types of articles are more interesting to you?

- ☐ District page(s) only
- ☐ Policy changes/new initiatives
- ☐ Innovative ideas MoDOT implements
- ☐ Statewide pages:
- ☐ Project information
- ☐ Awards to MoDOT employees
- ☐ Benefit information
- ☐ Other, please explain _____

Are *Connections* articles newsworthy?

- ☐ always
- ☐ usually not
- ☐ usually
- ☐ never
- ☐ sometimes

What was the article or topic you read in *Connections* over the past year that you found particularly newsworthy or informative? _____

Are *Connections* articles understandable?

- ☐ always
- ☐ usually not
- ☐ usually
- ☐ never
- ☐ sometimes

I prefer *Connections* to be delivered ...

- ☐ As it is, by mail in a newspaper format
- ☐ In an electronic format

Please return surveys or submit a story idea to Kristi Jamison at P.O. Box 270, Jefferson City, Mo. 65102 or by e-mail at kristine.jamison@modot.mo.gov.



The Never Made It safety belt marketing campaign will have a strong spring presence to impress the importance of safety belts on teens in time for spring activities.

Students Demonstrate Work Zone Safety in Poster Contest

by Megan Mills

Six young aspiring Missouri artists were selected as state winners for the 2006/2007 American Traffic Safety Services Foundation Work Zone Poster Contest. The winners were selected from more than 80 entries.

“This year we received more entries than ever before, making it hard to select just six state winners,” said Tim Cox, ATSSF poster contest coordinator. “The artwork was really phenomenal and we saw some very creative ideas.”

Left: Sixth-grader Maggie Roderick won first place in the grades 4-6 category for her “Be Smart & Drive Safe” poster.

Right: Third-grader Shelby Phelan won first place in the grades K-3 category for her Be Safe Get Your Head into the Zone!” poster.



2006 2007 ATSSF Poster Contest State Winners

Grades K-3 Category

1st place: Shelby Phelan, 3rd grade, John Glenn Elementary School, St. Joseph (D1)

2nd place: Brandon Hall, 3rd grade, John Glenn Elementary School, St. Joseph (D1)

3rd place: Morgan Landere, 1st grade, Clever Elementary School, Clever (D8)

Grades 4-6 Category

1st place: Maggie Roderick, 6th grade, Parkway Northeast Middle School, Creve Coeur (D6)

2nd place: Cecilia Bell, 6th grade, Parkway Northeast Middle School, Creve Coeur (D6)

3rd place: Caitlin Dailey, 6th grade, Moberly Middle School, Moberly (D2)

You’re Invited to the 2007 Earth Day Celebration!

WHO: Anyone who supports making Missouri a litter free state!

WHEN: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Friday, April 20

WHERE: State Capitol in Jefferson City

WHAT: Events include the No MORE Trash! Survivor game with host Twila Tanner, MoDOT employee and Survivor:Vanuatu contestant, an environmental Deal or No Deal, planting seedlings and much more!

WHY: The Earth Day celebration, sponsored by the Department of Natural Resources, is one of the many

events that will be held at the State Capitol in Jefferson City, Missouri, on Friday, April 20, 2007. The celebration will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and is free and open to the public.

Visit www.missouri.gov/earthday for more information.



Why Aren’t All Employees Tested?

ing MoDOT’s Random Drug Program

MoDOT tightened its drug policy to help make our employees safer and reduce the number of employees who are involved in accidents. At a recent Q&A session, Director Pete Rahn, answered questions raised about “Why aren’t all Missouri employees included in the random drug testing program?”

Director Rahn responded with this:

“We are testing all employees who are employed by MoDOT. We have the employers who are responsible for their own employment. We are requiring all employees to submit to random drug testing,

and we are testing all employees who are employed by MoDOT. We have the employers who are responsible for their own employment. We are requiring all employees to submit to random drug testing,

However, any employee can be tested for drugs if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that he or she is working while under the influence of drugs.

4

April Service Anniversaries

35 Years

Leonard J. Miller D8

30 Years

Michael J. Bashor D1
Allan B. Markt D1
Dan E. Ream D8
Roger D. Jadwin D9
Mark A. Simpson D9
Johnny L. Davis D10
John W. Koenig CO

25 Years

Richard J. Burns D6
Steven E. Burchell D7
Robert L. King D7

20 Years

Judy M. Franke D2
Billy J. Momphard D3
Kenneth R. Holtgrewe D5
Tudor Rafa D5
Karla L. Cryer D7
Paul R. Sterrett CO

15 Years

Kevin N. Teeter D1
Kevin J. Brawner D2
Robert L. Hughson D2

Michelle L. House D2
Timothy S. Inman D3
Gene M. Ryan D3
Danny R. Sawyer D3
Ernest F. Fickle D4
Michael W. Frizzell D4
Aydogan L. Girgin D4
Danny Williams D6
Michael T. Meinhardt D7
Gaytha S. Anderson D8
Shayne Engel D8
Richard D. Gardner D8
Jerry J. Steward D10
Steve B. Bates CO
Anthony J. Cummings CO
Janis M. Gieck CO
Stowe K. Johnson CO
Jennifer R. Prenger CO

10 Years

Charlotte D. Johnson D4
Rocky J. Johnson D4
Debra J. Lioubinski D7
Nancy A. Pietrzak D7
John E. Pratt D7
Tim B. Smith D8
Danny L. Bedwell D10
Donald W. Crites D10
Martin D. Elliott D10
Daniel W. Lacy D10

Barbara A. Langston CO
Dorothy J. Roush CO
Robert S. Taylor CO

5 Years

Billy D. Hamilton D1
Ralph L. Roach D1
Marcus R. Stauffer D2
Zachary K. Stout D2
Kirk M. Youngblood D3
Dennis W. Brown D5
Craig A. Fisher D5
Danny R. Scott D5
Anthony J. Cohill D6
Joseph Hemphill D6
Lowell C. House D6
Lucas K. Meese D6
James A. Perry D6
Gary L. Hatfield D7
Philip R. Smith D7
Richard E. Starchman D7
Gary L. Swartz D7
Brian E. Black D9
Wayne L. Creek D9
Javal L. Burton CO
Shirley J. Eslinger CO
David C. Williams CO
Lester Woods CO

In Memoriam

Active Employee

Mary S. Hugney D4 Feb. 11
Gary A. Gourley D8 Feb. 18
Craig Schnieders CO Feb. 23

Retirees

Earl Pierce D9 Feb. 5
Dewey G. Holland D10 Feb. 7
William “Bill” H. Shulse D3 Feb. 8
Roy E. Wilson D5 Feb. 12
John “Jack” W. Thurston, Jr. CO Feb. 17
Barry A. Strausbaugh D6 Feb. 18
Leroy A. Buschjost D5 Feb. 18
Ralph B. Hiatte CO Feb. 27
Herbert “Herb” L. Huth D5 Feb. 28

February Retirements

Name	Location	Years of Service
Bill Sweat	D1	29



Central Office

Abner Gwinn: Oldest Living MoDOT Retiree

by Patti Knopke

Over the past century, there have been plenty of advancements and changes in the way our world works, and Abner Gwinn has been here to see them all. At 104 years old, Gwinn, of Jefferson City,



Abner Gwinn, left, is talking to C.P. Owens in this photo taken at the headquarters building in 1956.

is the oldest living retiree of the Missouri Department of Transportation.

The youngest of three children, Gwinn was born in Stockton on Dec. 9, 1902. Nicknamed “Mascot” in high school, Gwinn was the peppiest student the school had ever seen.

After high school, Gwinn attended the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he enrolled in the College of Engineering. He took a year off of school to work and help pay his tuition, but returned to receive his bachelor’s degree in engineering in 1925.

After graduation, Gwinn’s first job was with the Missouri Highway Department. He was sent to Kirksville to design and supervise the building of concrete highways. A promotion in 1926 sent Gwinn all over the state as a project engineer working where he was needed. Although Gwinn traveled the state for his job in the 1920s, “today’s interstates shock him out of his gourd,” his second wife, Opal, said. “There was nothing like I-70 or I-55 then.”

Gwinn’s first stint at MoDOT was redirected during World War II. During that time, he worked at Fort Leonard Wood, designing and building barracks to house German prisoners of war. At the end of the war, Gwinn left MoDOT

to serve as the director of the Missouri State Parks system.

A few years later, however, Gwinn was back with the Missouri Highway Department with the newly organized Highway Safety Program. He continued working for MoDOT until 1968 when he retired at age 66. Gwinn chose to retire at that time because his first wife, Vivian, had developed cancer, and he wanted to stay at home with her. He did freelance work on the side during this time. Vivian died in 1972.

In 1973, Gwinn married Opal Richardson. “He is still very much a gentleman and a civil engineer,” said Opal of Gwinn. “He’ll study the placement of things and line them up and make sure they’re straight. He’ll never lose that.”

Gwinn stopped driving at age 88, but his wife says, “He was a good driver. He knew the highways.”

Gwinn was one of the founding members of the Missouri Society of Professional Engineers, which came into existence on July 11, 1937. Community work has also been a major part of Gwinn’s life. Gwinn was active for many years in the First Christian Church. He was appointed to the original Planning and Zoning Commission of the Memorial Hospital site. He also helped establish the Jefferson City Concert Association. Gwinn is a charter member of De-

Molay and a long-time member of the Order of the Eastern Star. As a member of the Grand Lodge of Missouri Ancient Free and Accepted Masons for about 80 years, Gwinn holds the title Sublime Degree of Master Mason.

“I don’t know of a better subject for 104. He’s sharp as a tack,” said Debbie Mincher, a close family friend, who cares for the Gwinns. “To me, we’re family.”

The last time the Gwinns got together with folks from the Highway Department was at a party held at McClung Park in Jefferson City.

“Of course, Abner was the oldest one there,” quipped Opal.

Today, the Gwinns take things one day at a time and enjoy every moment they have together. “I was 83 before I realized I was part of the older generation,” Gwinn said in a 2003 interview with the Jefferson City News Tribune. This outlook on life has seen him through 104 years and is sure to see him through many more enjoyable moments.



Abner and Opal

McKenna Gives Transportation Outlook at Conference

Commissioner Bill McKenna said it wasn’t too long ago that the members of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission would argue over who would have to speak at the annual Missouri Conference on Transportation because things weren’t going too well. That has changed in recent years, but McKenna’s upbeat talk still carried a somber undercurrent.

“Right now we’re riding a crest, but as you know the crest always hits the shore,” McKenna told the crowd of about 200 attending the Feb. 15 conference sponsored by MoDOT, the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and the Missouri Farm Bureau. “That’s why we have to stay ahead of the curve.”

McKenna said MoDOT had made great strides in building the trust of the

citizens through accomplishments such as the Smooth Roads Initiative, but he cautioned that Amendment 3 could be our worst enemy.

“The public sees orange barrels and thinks things are great, but in a few years our funding will dramatically decrease, and we’ll be back to where we were before Amendment 3,” McKenna said. “The good news is I think the governor and legislature understand the crest and the need to do something about it. The bad news is citizens will have to vote for more revenue, but they usually don’t respond favorably unless there’s a crisis.”

McKenna walked the crowd through the amount of transportation revenue MoDOT receives and how it is spent to show how thin the funding is spread.

For example - when all is said and done - MoDOT is left with only about 3.5 cents of the 17-cent per gallon fuel tax it receives.

“We have a big challenge ahead,” McKenna said. “But I think the future can be bright if the right approach is taken.”

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Praises Missouri for Innovative Transportation Ideas

by Sally Oxenhandler

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Mary E. Peters was the keynote speaker at the 2007 Missouri Conference on Transportation. Her message: MoDOT is doing an incredible job in Missouri.

Peters said she was impressed with the department’s innovative transportation programs and how the agency was making wise use of taxpayer dollars. She called Missouri a national leader when it comes to embracing innovative approaches and solutions.

“The Show Me State is showing America how to deliver highway projects on budget and on schedule, and even ahead of schedule.”

Secretary Mary E. Peters

Peters, who oversees the federal agency in charge of the nation’s transportation system, cited MoDOT’s Smoother,

Safer, Sooner program; the Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Plan; design-build projects; public-private partnerships; and bonding as some of the creative methods Missouri is using to improve its transportation system.

The Safe & Sound Bridge Plan “is attracting national attention for its especially creative approach to fixing the 800 worst bridges in the state,” Peters said.

Such initiatives are producing measurable results that free up travel lanes in Missouri. Peters said she has made fighting congestion a top priority, and the federal budget targets \$175 million for congestion relief. The Interstate 70 truck corridor between Missouri and Ohio is one of the projects being considered to receive some of that federal funding.

for more info

Connections Editor
Phone
E-mail

105 W. Capitol Avenue
P.O. Box 270
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Kristi Jamison
573.526.2482
kristine.jamison@modot.mo.gov

D1

Northwest

ATSSF Work Zone Poster Contest

by M. Elaine Justus

Each year, the American Traffic Safety Services Foundation sponsors a nationwide Work Zone Poster Contest. The winners in each state receive an individual cash award while the schools they attend receive a matching amount.

It is an honor to have even one winner from your district be recognized by the ATSSF, so imagine our surprise and delight to find the Northwest District had the bragging rights for three winners. Even more incredibly, they are all from the same school.

John Glenn Elementary School is located just a few miles north of the Northwest District office, and their principal, Vance Vanderwerken, was thrilled to have his students recognized. So much so, that he brought together the entire school (about 300 students) to watch as the awards were presented.

With a number of MoDOT employees’ children in the audience, the students cheered as their fellow students were given awards. Besides a framed copy of their entry, they received a special certificate, signed by District Engineer Don Wichern. The top two winners also received monetary awards. First place winner Shelby Phelan received \$100, while second place winner Brandon Hall received \$50. Although honorable mention winner Kennyn Sandy did not receive a money, his entry will be included in the national competition. On behalf of John Glenn Elementary School, Principal Vanderwerken accepted a matching amount of \$150. He promised to let us know how they put the money to use.

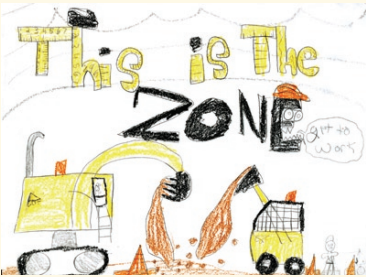


Cathy Morrison

The winners of the Work Zone Poster Contest are (left to right) Shelby Phelan, Brandon Hall and Kennyn Sandy. They are all from the same third grade class at John Glenn Elementary School. Their teacher, Lynne Evinger, proudly joined them for the award presentation.



1st Place Winner - Shelby Phelan



2nd Place Winner - Brandon Hall



Honorable Mention - Kennyn Sandy

DUI: A Powerful Lesson?

by M. Elaine Justus

Try to imagine, if you can, 500 high school juniors and seniors out of class on a beautiful spring day sitting in an

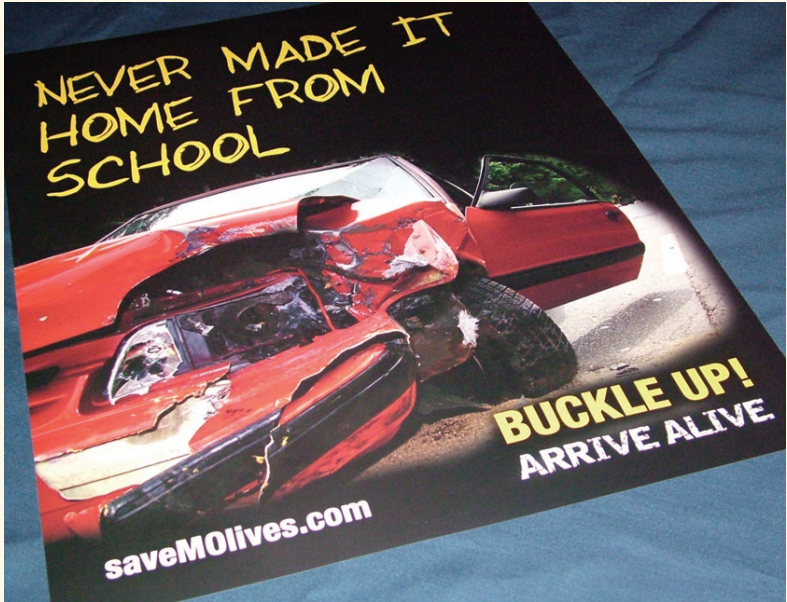
auditorium on a university campus. That much energy and adolescence in one place can be pretty overwhelm-

ing. Now imagine that same group of students riveted, unmoving and speechless. Engrossed in a presentation for a full 50 minutes. Take it from someone who was there, it was eerie, but awe-inspiring.

The Northwest Regional Blueprint for Safety Coalition made the decision last year to try to educate our younger drivers about the consequences of choosing to not buckle up and/or choosing to drive while impaired. Rather than purchase ad space in local papers or airtime on local radio stations, we decided we would rather bring the message to them live.

To that end, we contacted the organization “CampuSpeak” out of Denver, Colorado and arranged to have Mark Sterner come and share his own personal experience with as many students as we could bring together. When we tried this same type of event last year, a number of high schools told us the cost of busing their students to any type of a presentation was just too prohibitive. Because of that, we built into the Blueprint budget a specific fund from which we could reimburse schools for their travel expenses. Our strategy worked. Nine high schools responded with an enthusiastic “YES!”

Mark opened his presentation with the statement that he didn’t want to tell them what to do, but they ought to know what could happen to them if they made poor choices. Mark was on spring break with four of his best college buddies. They were all seniors with their lives just beginning, and they wanted to celebrate. Their last night on break in Florida, they picked Mark to drive them back to their condo because he was the “least drunk.” The rented car left the road and flipped end over end for 200 yards. Three of his friends died immediately and Mark, himself, spent two weeks in a coma. He regained consciousness to find he was under arrest for felony manslaughter and headed to prison for 45 years. The parents of his dead friends intervened and the sentence was reduced to three years with 13 years probation. Since his release from prison, he has travelled around the U.S. talking to university students and high school juniors and seniors, letting them know what poor choices can do. He will not talk with any media and he has turned down offers to appear on national talk shows, including the “Oprah Winfrey Show,” because he has promised the families of his friends he will not make a spectacle of their sons’ memories.



Holly Lea Murphy

This poster, produced by MoDOT’s Coalition for Roadway Safety, was distributed to over 500 students and their respective high school counselors following the presentation.

for more info

Community Relations Manager	Elaine Justus
Phone	816.387.2353
E-mail	margaret.justus@modot.mo.gov
3602 N. Belt Highway	
St. Joseph, MO 64506-1399	

D2

North Central

Spring is in the Air

Spring is in the air, and for MoDOT employees and highway contractors that means the onset of work zones across the state.

District 2, along with all districts, takes work zone safety very seriously. Every employee working on the roadway

road to do their job. It's something everyone knows must be in the forefront of their mind. No matter what job they are getting ready to tackle, they can't relax that vigilance for one instant.

We like to think that when the public sees work zones they become excited,



Four resurfacing projects on Route 36 this summer will have contractors working across three counties, practically turning Macon, Linn and Livingston counties into one big work zone.

receives work zone training and flagger training. Senior workers are also given the opportunity to attend a two-day Advanced Work Zone Training.

"This advanced training delves into the philosophy of work zones and helps trainees think through situations that aren't covered by standards," said Health and Safety Manager Shari Dye.



District 2's Concrete Crew on Route 36 in Linn County.

"It also includes brainstorming sessions where attendees find solutions to provided scenarios."

The advanced training manual is a whopping 72 pages long, so it is definitely an in-depth training.

Work zone safety is practiced every day when maintenance, construction and special crews employees take to the

knowing that progress is being made to improve our highway system. We also like to think that they realize the dangers associated with work zones if they are not alert and do not pay attention to traffic control devices and what is going on around them.

Sergeant Brent Bernhardt, public information and education officer with the Missouri State Highway Patrol Troop B, says a big focus for the patrol's information officers is to educate the public on work zone safety through news releases, media interviews and presentations at public events.

Like MoDOT, Brent and all highway patrol personnel take work zone safety very serious. Each year officers work every chance they get in construction areas, even putting in overtime, to slow motorist down and issue citations for speeding, passing or being reckless through these areas. The patrol wants to protect both motorists and highway workers alike.

Brent also personally spreads the word on work zone safety and the move over law to friends and family. "This is

Cones and Barrels



Above: ASSTF Representative Tim Cox, Caitlin Daily, teacher Alexis Holman and Principal Aaron Vitt. Below left: Caitlin's third place winning poster.



The American Traffic Safety Services Foundation once again held their "Life Behind the Cones and Barrels" poster contest for kindergarten through sixth-grade students.

Caitlin Daily was the third place winner with her poster, "Watch the Signs Watch Your Speed." Caitlin is a sixth-grade student at Moberly Middle School. Caitlin and her school each received a \$25 check for placing in the contest, and her poster will be entered in the national competition.

Valerie Schmidt, a sixth-grade student at Macon Middle School, received an honorable mention for her poster, "Pay Attention or Pay the Price." Valerie received a certificate of appreciation for her poster and will also be entered in the national competition.

ASSTF Representative Tim Cox visited the district to present Caitlin and Valerie their awards.



Above: ASSTA Representative Tim Cox, Valerie Schmidt and teacher Julie Smith. Below: Valerie's honorable mention poster.



something that MoDOT employees can do also," said Bernhardt. "Spread the word so that your friends and family can tell people that they personally know a MoDOT employee working out on the roadway and they don't want anything happening to them."

MoDOT personnel know the dangers of working on our roadways. Being

properly trained, having the work zones set up as they should be and educating motorists on what their responsibility is when traveling through construction and maintenance areas helps everyone feel more secure.

Be safe this season.

for more info

Community Relations Manager Tammy Wallace
Phone 660.385.8209
E-mail tammy.wallace@modot.mo.gov
Route 63
P.O. Box 8
Macon, MO 63552



Jefferson City Bridge Crew on the Missouri River Bridge at Glasgow.

D3

Northeast

Employees Are 'In The Mix'

A new process to ensure project quality is putting employees "in the mix" with regard to their jobs.

"Now we perform sampling on materials at the point of incorporation into projects," explained Britt McClain, senior materials inspector.

This new process benefits everyone involved. "Due to changes in specs, the quality at the quarry is now their responsibility, so our inspectors are

now on job sites sampling materials as they are incorporated into the project," McClain said. He and his co-workers agree the change has helped alleviate strain for construction inspectors and improved use of the material's staff.

Macy Rodenbaugh, construction and material's engineer, expects to see no issues with the new processes even though the Northeast District has the largest number of construction projects than ever before. "We have to make sure we are communicating among all the staff involved, but I anticipate this will be a successful change."

Local Enforcement Slows Drivers in the Zone

While the Northeast District has several major work zones that have continued through the winter, one of the most challenging has been on Route 61 in Moscow Mills where a \$15 million interchange is being built.

Working closely with local law enforcement, officers regularly patrol Route 61, helping to maintain the 45 mph speed limit through the work zone. Prior to the speed reduction, accidents were a regular occurrence in the area; since the project began, there have been only minor fender benders. "Extra enforcement has helped maintain a level of safety after closing Route C and send-

ing traffic to other crossovers," said Brian Untiedt, traffic studies specialist.

Drivers aren't always happy about the reduced speed limit, especially when an officer is waiting just over the crest of a hill.

"We are grateful the police are doing a great job," said Senior Construction Inspector Henry Burkemper. "Their presence definitely keeps traffic slowed down." While much of the extra enforcement is being done on their own, the police department is also receiving some funding through MoDOT.

New pictures of the interchange project are available on the District 3 Web site.



Tom Owen, senior construction inspector, helping with the Route 61 and C interchange in Moscow Mills, explains how the contractor's crew is working to secure rebar on the new bridge deck. Although much of the work is being done on the bridge, Tom and other MoDOT staff are thankful that the local police force has kept traffic slowed down in this congested, high-speed area.

for more info

Community Relations Manager	Marisa Brown
Phone	573.248.2502
E-mail	marisa.brown@modot.mo.gov
Route 61 South	
P.O. Box 1067	
Hannibal, MO 63401	



Tim Hays, senior materials inspector, takes a sample of fly ash in the Bleigh Ready-Mix plant in Monroe City. While materials' standards have not been relaxed, the process to review and approve materials used in roads has changed. Tim and his co-workers now find themselves inside more where production occurs, rather than outside where it is finalized.

Awards, Rewards, and Fritos?

District 3 employees recently took some time out of their busy schedules to recognize the good deeds of a few of their co-workers. Gary Jackson was sent to retirement with several mementos of his 29 year career at MoDOT, including a bag of Fritos® from "The Frito Bandit!" A few years back, one of Gary's co-workers got hungry and raided his stash. While it's an event to laugh about now, when Gary discovered his snack was missing, he wasn't very happy. Gary was wished well

by everyone who attended his retirement reception in Shelbyville last month.

Kevin Barker received a nice reward for his idea to install programmable thermostats in all the maintenance buildings. By installing these thermostats, District 3 expects to save more than \$30,000 in a year.

Matt Golian's Plum Wild Chili was the winner this year of the District 3 Chili Cookoff held to benefit the Children's Christmas Committee. The competition was 'hot' with eight entries. Susie Shutte's MaBoys came in second. Several hundred dollars were raised to help provide a surprise Christmas to disadvantaged children.

Top: Rob Fleak gave Gary Jackson a fresh bag of Fritos as a going away gift at his retirement reception.

Middle: Sherri McGregor of business and benefits presents Kevin Barker with his recognition certificate.

Bottom: Matt Golian (left) accepts the traveling trophy from last year's TNT Chili winner Tom Batenhorst.



D4

Kansas City Area

Winter Snows, Can't Stop Untangling the Triangle

by Steve Porter

The Triangle project is entering the final lap this season, and even winter storms couldn't keep workers from moving forward. Now known as 3-Trails Crossing Memorial Highway, the last vestiges of the old Triangle interchange will soon be gone.

Collector ramps were completed and Route 71 traffic shifted from the old mainline pavement in December and January so workers could remove old pavement and bridges. Now that

tion projects to the south at Route 150 in Grandview and at 163rd Street in Belton will also reduce lanes and slow traffic. And resurfacing crews will work on Route 71 between Blue Ridge Boulevard at the Kansas City/Grandview city limits and the Cass County line.

Ice, sleet and snowstorms have bedeviled workers on the project since late November. But there's still progress to report: This spring a wider, four-



the construction season is taking off again, crews are building a new Route 71 between Red Bridge Road and Blue Ridge Boulevard, reconstructing the ramp from eastbound Interstate 435 to northbound Route 71, rehabilitating Route 71 pavement north of Bannister Road, and adding lanes and ramps on northbound and southbound Route 71.

The Route 71 reconstruction and other projects along the highway will challenge motorists throughout 2007. The roadway will be constricted to only one through lane in the 3-Trails Crossing throughout most of the year because of seven merges within the interchange. Interchange reconstruc-

tion projects to the south at Route 150 in Grandview and at 163rd Street in Belton will also reduce lanes and slow traffic. And resurfacing crews will work on Route 71 between Blue Ridge Boulevard at the Kansas City/Grandview city limits and the Cass County line.

By the end of 2007, the 3-Trails Crossing will offer travelers three through lanes in all directions, more ramp capacity and better alignment — a safer, smoother, smarter interchange that can handle up to 400,000 vehicles per day converging from Route 71 and interstates 435 and 470. Work on Route 71 at the Route 150 and 163rd Street interchanges will continue into 2008.

for more info

Community Relations Manager
Phone
E-mail

Joel Blobaum
816.622.6327
joel.blobaum@modot.mo.gov

600 NE Colbern Road
Lee's Summit, MO 64068

Worker's Injury Slight In Busy Triangle Project

by Steve Porter

What may be the busiest work zone in the state for the past seven years continues to have a remarkably good safety record, but untangling the Triangle interchange hasn't been free of work-zone-related traffic injuries.

A motorist driving on northbound Route 71 struck a Clarkson Construction Company worker on January 3 after crews had closed the right lane to work on the shoulder. Clarkson worker Joe Smith was struck on the arm by the passenger side-view mirror of an oncoming vehicle that had continued into the closed lane. Although he was thrown several feet by the impact, Smith was not badly injured and returned to work that same day.

The driver admitted to police that she was speeding while driving in a closed section of the construction zone. She was issued tickets for careless driving and speeding in a construction zone. The incident delayed work for several hours and backed up traffic for thousands of motorists.

The interchange carries about 250,000 vehicles per day, and has been under reconstruction since May 2001.

"This is an extraordinary safety record for such a busy project, and it proves that if we all make work zone safety a priority, the outcome can be excellent," said District Engineer Beth Wright.

Feb. 22-27: A Parade of Public Meetings

by Joel Blobaum

Although the flurry of activity doesn't rival the record-setting pace of 2006, when District 4 hosted or had a hand in 24 public meetings, plans for three Kansas City-area projects were exhibited and discussed in less than a week in late February.

A new interchange for Route 71 in northern Cass County began the parade on Feb. 22, when 213 people attended the session in Belton to learn about plans for the new facilities two miles south of Route 58. Cass County and the cities of Raymore and Belton are participating in the project, which should begin construction in 2008. Comments about connections to the interchange via outer roads dominated the evening's discussions.

A meeting in Northern Johnson County in Pittsville described detours and construction plans for a Blackwater River bridge replacement project

on Route 131, closing the route at the project site for about three months beginning in May; the official detour along state routes is 13 miles long. Twenty-six emergency service representatives and interested citizens attended the informational meeting.

The Grandview session was a milepost in the public involvement process to widen Route 150 to four lanes between Route 71 and Route 291. The \$30 million, eight-mile project is expected to begin in 2008 and be complete in 2010. About 150 people attended the session, which displayed the proposed alignment for the Amendment 3 project.

The district's next public meeting is April 3, when plans to replace the Noland Road bridge over Interstate 70 will be displayed from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Truman High School in Independence.



Director Pete Rahn presents the District 4 winning team of the Chip Seal Performance Challenge with a check for \$5,000. The team won for the fine aggregate category after completing the competition last August.

D5

Central

Priority for Highway Workers and Motorists – Always Be Safe

by Holly Dentner

While our construction employees prepare for a new season, MoDOT maintenance employees will focus on patching, chip sealing and other work that will soon keep them busy on mid-Missouri's roads. The maintenance crews will be on major and minor routes, working jobs that can last a week or just a few hours. As spring arrives, it's time for maintenance workers to shift gears and start preparing for warmer weather.

"First we'll clean all the winter equipment," said Jim Honse, maintenance superintendent. "Then our crew workers will check over the pull pavers and oil distributors and make sure they're ready to go for the season."

Major work for the maintenance crews will include sealing roads, flushing bridges, repairing concrete, mowing and other work that requires the same safety requirements necessary in all work zones. With crew leaders and maintenance supervisors enrolled in

advanced work zone training this year, they're getting a bonus refresher course.

"I see a huge benefit from the work zone training this year," said Honse. "It does us good to hear all that information again."

Maintenance workers in the Central District face the busiest highway in the state, Interstate 70, and minor lettered routes with a similar attitude: it's not the amount of traffic on the road, but the people who don't pay attention that are the problem.

"On minor routes some drivers think they're the only ones on the road," says Kerry Thompson, maintenance superintendent. "On the bigger routes, they might be going a long distance or talking on their cell phone and they don't notice what's around them."

"I would tell travelers this summer to pay attention to signs and watch out for road workers and their equipment. The most important thing, for motorists and employees, is to always be safe."

Busy Winter Draws Attention to MoDOT Road Crews

by Holly Dentner

The summer construction season may be just around the corner, but a few weeks ago our crews were busy, once again, clearing mid-Missouri roads of snow and ice.

The snow came early morning on Tuesday, Feb. 13, and was especially heavy

during the morning drive time. I joined the Jefferson City road crews around 9:30 a.m., when sev-

eral trucks were getting a fresh load of salt and calcium chloride. The heavy snow was over by that time, but most roads were still covered or partially covered. Total accumulation was estimated at four to six inches.

Jason Lackman started work at 4:30 a.m. that day and he was driving one of the trucks that had come back to the shed for more salt. Lackman is a senior maintenance worker for the district's concrete crew, but when the weather's bad he drives a snowplow.

Lackman and I headed out on Route 50 to south on Route D in Cole County. We didn't make it too far before we came upon what looked like an accident, with two cars and a sheriff's vehicle blocking one lane. Lackman got out to see if he could help, but the cars were simply stuck on



MoDOT Director Pete Rahn rode along with Senior Maintenance Worker Clint Jones after the Feb. 13 snow.

Shaun Schmitz



for more info

Community Relations Manager	Kristin Gerber
Phone	573.522.3375
E-mail	kristin.gerber@modot.mo.gov
1511 Missouri Boulevard	
P.O. Box 718	
Jefferson City, MO 65102	



Cathy Morrison

Local and state officials help U.S. Sen. Kit Bond break ground with the district's five-handed shovel.

Route 50 Relocation Project Begins in Cole and Moniteau Counties

In Cole and Moniteau counties, 10,000 vehicles travel on U.S. Route 50 every day. The road is heavily used by commuters between California and Jefferson City, and also serves as an important alternative to Interstate 70.

Construction began in February to build an eleven-mile stretch of new four-lane highway from the existing St. Martins interchange to Route K, east of California. It is the first part of a two-phase project to address safety and capacity issues on Route 50.



Cathy Morrison

Transportation Commissioner Mike Kehoe closed the ceremony by breaking ground with a track loader.

MoDOT held a ceremonial ground-breaking on Feb. 26 to celebrate the beginning of this high-profile project

for mid-Missouri. Over 150 people gathered to hear from state and local officials about the benefit the new road will have on the area. Speakers included U.S. Sen. Christopher "Kit" Bond, who emphasized the importance of improved safety. Sen. Bond provided a \$20 million federal earmark to help fund the project.

After a performance by California High School vocal group "Sounds of Joy," Missouri Highways and Transportation Commissioner Mike Kehoe used a track loader to kick off construction.

The first phase of the Route 50 relocation project will be completed by the end of 2008. Illinois Valley Paving Company of Springfield, Ill., was awarded the low bid of \$29,874,886, which was \$5 million under the programmed cost. The second phase is seven miles, from Route K to just west of California. It is scheduled for completion by the end of 2010.

Funding comes from the Smoother, Safer, Sooner Program resulting from the passage of Amendment 3 in 2004.

an icy patch as they tried to turn into a business entrance. He shoveled a little salt around their tires and continued on his way.

"We can't always do a lot for people, but we try the best we can," said Lackman.

After plowing Route D between Route 50 and Route C, we headed over to routes T, 179 and NN. At one point, Lackman exchanged a head nod and wave as he crossed paths with the driver of a county snowplow, one of the few other vehicles on the road.

The truck was covered with snow flying up from the plow. The passenger side mirror had a thick layer of brownish snow on it, and the window wasn't much cleaner. Despite the fact that the truck's speed is fairly slow, snow sails from the plow with surprising force.

"Plowing on trash day can be interesting," said Lackman. "If the trash collectors put the empty cans too close to the road, they just go flying when the snow hits them."



Holly Dentner

A view from the passenger seat of Route D in Cole County after the Feb. 13 snowfall.

Like every other snowplow driver working that day in the district, Lackman will drive these same routes over and over until they're clear. During bad weather, workers like Lackman are critical for making the roads safe for motorists. He will work an eleven-hour shift plowing snow, but he says he doesn't mind it.

"If you think this is bad, come back in August when I'm repairing concrete!"

As of mid-March, the district has used 24,355 tons of salt and 312,410 gallons of fuel fighting winter road conditions; employees have logged 32,510 hours plowing snow; and \$78,586 have been spent to hire emergency snowplow drivers. District crews have spent a total of 19 days plowing snow this season.

D6

St. Louis Area

Groundbreaking Kicks Off I-64 Construction

by Linda Wilson

District 6 is gearing up for construction season, and work zone safety is crucial to the success of any construction project, especially for the new Interstate 64. During this busy construction season, MoDOT requests that all drivers watch out for our workers and drive smart in work zones to arrive alive!

Nearly 100 people gathered in St. Louis on March 19 to mark the beginning of construction on the first design-build project in Missouri. The I-64 project will overhaul 10 miles from west of Spoeede Road in St. Louis County to east of Kingshighway in St. Louis City. It will also rebuild all 12 interchanges and include a new direct connection between I-64 and Interstate 170.

the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission. Construction work began in late March 2007 with completion no later than July 31, 2010.

The 3½-year construction project will include the complete closure of five miles of I-64 in 2008 and the other five miles in 2009. The aggressive schedule will complete the work in record time to stay within budget, maximize the improvements to the public and minimize disruption.

“Every individual in St. Louis must take action and plan their daily trips with this project,” said Hassinger. “Life will go on in St. Louis and we’ll all survive this construction. When the job is finished, we will stand at this interchange



MoDOT employees, Gateway Constructors and local elected officials marked the beginning of construction on the new I-64 project at the groundbreaking ceremony in Richmond Heights at the northeast corner of the I-64 and I-170 interchange.

Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission Chairman Bill McKenna marked the significance of the day. “Today, we begin the single largest contract in MoDOT history,” McKenna said.

Other speakers at the ceremony included, MoDOT Chief Engineer Kevin Keith, House Transportation Committee Chairman Rep. Neal St. Onge, St. Louis County Executive Charlie Dooley and St. Louis Board of Public Service President Marjorie Melton. MoDOT District 6 Engineer Ed Hassinger served as the Master of Ceremony.

The \$535 million project was awarded to Gateway Constructors, a joint-venture partnership, in November 2006 by

in 2010 and celebrate the great event of completing this project.”

In preparation of the big closures in 2008, District 6 is re-striping interstates 70 and 44 to add one more lane in each direction in addition to traffic signals being improved on other parallel roads. A 511 phone number will be available for motorists to get current traffic conditions on St. Louis roadways. A mapping tool will be added to MoDOT’s Web site for directions to any location in St. Louis routing motorists around the closed sections of I-64. To stay up-to-date on the I-64 project, visit www.thenewi64.org.

I-64 Project Director Receives Prestigious Award

by Kara Price

Lesley Hoffarth, project director of the new I-64 development, was recognized by the Missouri Society of Professional Engineers - St. Louis Chapter for her hard work and dedicated efforts on this project. Hoffarth was named the 2007 Outstanding Professional Engineer in

Government for the St. Louis region at the annual awards dinner.

“Lesley exemplifies everything that is best about MoDOT,” District 6 Engineer Ed Hassinger said. “I am pleased that the Missouri Society of Professional Engineers recognized her with this prestigious award.”



Lesley Hoffarth receives the 2007 Outstanding Professional Engineer in Government for the St. Louis region from Allan Erdman, president of the MSPE chapter.

Battle of the Belt Winners

by Kara Price

MoDOT is pleased to celebrate the success of the Battle of the Belt challenge. District 6 held a news conference March 9 to honor the two regional high schools winners, Clayton High School and New Haven High School. Battle of the Belt is an educational program where local high schools competed against each other to increase safety belt use and potentially save lives. The challenge involved an initial surprise safety belt check of students, followed by a peer-designed educational blitz and a final surprise safety belt check to determine if change of behavior occurred.

District 6 Engineer Ed Hassinger was the Master of Ceremony. He pointed out that Clayton High School and New Haven High School were not afraid of a challenge. “They know the importance of students buckling up, and have the prize money to prove it,” Hassinger said. “These two high schools should be acknowledged for their hard work and dedicated efforts in this great initiative.”

There were two categories in which schools were eligible for a cash prize. The first category was the highest overall seatbelt usage rate. In this category, Clayton High School has the highest percentage of more than 97 percent. The second category was the largest

usage rate improvement. New Haven High School had the largest increase of the regional schools, which was 17.5 percent. Therefore, both Clayton High School and New Haven High School each received a cash prize of \$250.

More than 100 schools participated statewide from Oct. 1 through Nov. 30, with two winners chosen from each of 10 regions. MoDOT headquarters in Jefferson City determined the two statewide winners, who each received \$500. The program is jointly sponsored by the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety and American Family Insurance. American Family generously provided the prize money for the competition.

Local elected officials spoke at the news conference to share in the celebration of these schools’ dedicated efforts. Some legislators are pushing for the primary safety belt law where you can get a ticket for not wearing your safety belt. “We’re really hoping to get this done this year, and I’m very optimistic we can,” said Rep. Neal St. Onge at the news conference. “This new law could easily save 90 lives a year.”

All of the regional schools that participated in Battle of the Belt were well over the average statewide teen usage rate of 58 percent, which is very encouraging!

MoDOT hopes to continue this program and see even more of an increase among teens who are an important audience for safety belt messages. For more information on the importance of safety belts, visit SaveMOLives.com or call 1-800-800-BELT.



Paramedic Kyle Quick, also a New Haven High School alumni and active member of the Battle of the Belt Challenge, spoke at the news conference on the importance of wearing safety belts.

for more info

Community Relations
Phone
E-mail

1590 Woodlake Drive
Chesterfield, MO 63017

Kara Price
314.340.4160
kara.price@modot.mo.gov

D7

Southwest

Empowerment Results in Safe, Effective Work Zone

by Lori Marble and Wendy Brunner-Lewis

“The show is about over, but while it lasted, it must have been something to see.” So began a recent article in *The Joplin Globe*, the largest daily newspaper to serve the District 7 region. The “show” referred to the first phase of a project designed to put in place improvements to the intersection at 20th and Range Line in Joplin. Easily the busiest stretch of road, in the largest city in the district.

The 20th and Range Line project at first glance appeared to be anything but an opportunity for good press. Wally Kennedy, of *The Joplin Globe*, continued his report:

One would think that having your strip of Range Line Road torn up for two weeks would hurt business. Think again. Some people get their kicks watching big machines do their thing.

Pizza By Stout, 2101 S. Range Line, always a contender for best pizza in Joplin, has been the place of late to see the action. The Missouri Department of Transportation ripped up the pavement not far from the front door of the pizza parlor to install new box culverts to rechannel part of Joplin Creek.

“The construction hasn’t affected us. Our business has held very well,” said Joy Stout, who manages the family business.

“We have been selling pizza to the workers, and I would like to commend them for being the nice, professional group they

are. But the project was a great source of entertainment for watching big boys with their big toys.

“Our front room was filled with everyone from 80-year-olds to 2-year-olds watching that big equipment move around. They were having a blast watching it, and from a front-row seat.”

“The lane closures went much better than we expected,” said Rowland Harmon, the project’s inspector with MoDOT. “We appreciate the business owners’ patience and the motorists’ patience while we made these improvements.”

Improvements to the intersection are scheduled to continue through November. The remaining work should close lanes only at night, with only the occasional daytime closure.

“MoDOT’s philosophy of empowering the employees allowed Senior Construction Inspector Rowland Harmon to make field changes to the plans—resulting in a better work zone.”

Resident Engineer Mike Middleton

“I think everyone directly related to the culvert work on Range Line Road did a great job of executing the work,” said Jerry Davis, project manager. “I know we struggled very hard with the idea of closing Range Line Road down to only two lanes during the planning stages and everyone was very skeptical that it would work up until the day it actually happened.”

nance, traffic and community relations staff to outline methods of informing the public of the work zone plans and expected delays.

- Southbound Business 71 (Range Line Road) traffic was transitioned into one lane prior to the 20th and Range Line intersection with a left turn lane open for eastbound traffic on 20th.
- Southbound 71B traffic was transitioned into one lane starting at 24th Street with all southbound lanes opening back again approximately 150 feet south of the 20th and Range Line intersection.
- A review of the weather three days before the initial start date was made to determine any changes to this schedule, with a delay of one week incorporated due to possible winter weather.



Rowland Harmon

- Traffic control placement began at 7 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 18. Traffic shifted to the east outside two lanes of Range Line, with one lane open for both northbound and southbound traffic starting at 7:30 a.m. the next day.

- Culvert construction began with crews working 24 hours daily until completion of the west half of the box culvert.
- On Feb. 26 traffic was shifted to the west two outside lanes with crews continuing to work 24 hours daily.
- Culvert completed with all lanes opened on Range Line March 4.

Resident Engineer Mike Middleton believes the designers set up a great work zone package, but that the MoDOT philosophy of ‘empowering our employees’ came into play when Harmon was able to make some field changes to the plan.

“Rowland’s experience really played a strong role,” said Middleton. “He saw some things that could be done to make things work better and he took the initiative to do them.”

The work zone changes initiated as the work progressed included: shutting down the left-hand turn lane for northbound traffic, adding more tubular markers and adding width to the lanes.

According to Daryl Weinkein, district traffic engineer, Traffic Operations Engineer Dave Taylor and Senior Traffic Studies Specialist John Fite also deserve credit for the success of the work zone. Taylor and Fite examined the signal timing and spent considerable time and effort nudging the traffic flow.

“Basically, we doubled the amount of green time at the 20th Street intersection,” said Taylor. “John and I spent a lot of time before the project began, sitting and watching the traffic. It took some back and forth playing with the cycles to get and keep everyone moving through the work zone smoothly.”

Rowland Harmon

for more info

Community Relations Manager Lori Marble
Phone 417.629.3329
E-mail lori.marble@modot.mo.gov

3901 E. 32nd Street
P.O. Box 1445
Joplin, MO 64802

D8

Springfield Area

New DE Kirk Juranas Strives To Be Open, Straightforward

by Bob Edwards

Being available to employees, keeping them informed and listening to their views are major goals of new District Engineer Kirk Juranas.

“When I talk to folks, I just like to tell them the truth. I don’t put any frosting on anything,” Juranas said approaching the early-April start of his tenure in District 8.

He will celebrate successes. He wants “to make sure we check ourselves” periodically to see that the district is going in the right direction.

“Our employees are going to have to challenge management. We need their ideas to move forward.”

Juranas’ appointment was made in early March. When introduced to the management team, he said, “I’m glad to be here. Love the area. It’s a great opportunity.” He replaces Dale Ricks, who retired after five years as District 8’s top executive. Through the rest of March, Juranas finished up his du-



Juranas

ties as District 3’s District Engineer and worked at home to prepare for his family’s move.

MoDOT Chief Engineer Kevin Keith said Juranas has a common-sense attitude, is very approachable, has experience in urban and rural settings and will fit in well in the Springfield area.

“Kirk brings proven leadership. He’s got a track record of delivering major projects,” Keith said.

Juranas said he believes in partnerships between MoDOT and local communities – an approach that also has worked well in District 8 for many years. He anticipates developing a solid working relationship with area legislators, planning organizations and local officials.

Juranas, 48, has held management positions in District 9, Central Office in Jefferson City and District 4. He earned a civil engineering degree in 1982 from the University of Missouri-Columbia. He joined MoDOT in 1984 as a construction inspector in District 6.

He and his wife, Brenda, have three sons – one in college, one in senior high and one in middle school.

April Retirements

by Angela Eden

Springfield Regional Maintenance Supervisor Mike Descamps

Service: 29 years
(Hired May 1, 1978)

Career: data collector, Traffic, 1978; maintenance crew leader, 1987 and district maintenance clerk, District Office, 1989; Republic maintenance supervisor, 1995; Springfield regional maintenance supervisor, 1999

Memorable Work: Helping start the Emergency Response program

Quote: “I like watching people work their way up the ladder” at MoDOT.



Descamps

Post-MoDOT Plans: Spending time with his grandson; starting up a leadership training business

Right of Way Office Agent Shirley Fortner

Service: 19 years
(Hired Nov. 10, 1987)

Career: legal secretary, District Counsel, 1987; Right of Way agent, Right of Way, 1995; customer service representative, Administration, 1996; office agent, Right of Way, 1997

Memorable Work: During her early career in Legal, she got to go up in a plane as the district worked to identify property needed to build the James River Freeway across south Springfield



Fortner



Bob Edwards

D8 at Work

Republic Maintenance Supervisor Bret Hicks (top photo) attaches the nameplate of friend and co-worker Will Crain to the District 8 Employees Memorial, with members of Crain’s family participating in a March 15 service. Crain, who died while on the job in October 2006, worked as a seasonal on the Sign Crew.

Marshfield Intermediate Maintenance Worker David Bell (photo on bottom left) flags traffic on Webster County Route M near Nian-gua during an ice-storm debris cleanup operation.

Members of a warning-sign replacement project (photo on bottom right) along Route 14 east of Ava include Ava Senior Maintenance Worker Randal Ewing, above, and Sign Crew Maintenance Worker Clint Eidson.

Quote: The biggest change at MoDOT has been the addition of computers. “I don’t know how everyone got it (their work) done without them.”

Post-MoDOT Plans: Traveling, fishing, gardening and attending auctions

Transportation Project Designer Vic Shelton

Service: 36 years
(Hired July 13, 1970)

Career: All in Design – highway design technician, 1970; intermediate design technician, 1974; highway designer, 1984; intermediate highway designer, 1989; senior highway designer, 1993; transportation project designer, 2005

Memorable Work: To name a few – Widening Route 65 to four lanes between Springfield and Branson, relocating Route 13 at Branson West, building the Interstate 44 interchange at Strafford, widening Kearney Street to five lanes between Kansas Expressway and West Bypass

Quote: “The big change is computers... going from manual to computerized design.” What used to take months to change can now be done in minutes.

Post-MoDOT Plans: Traveling with wife, Peggy, and spending more time with granddaughter, Danielle



Shelton

Safety is No. 1

by Angela Eden

Warmer weather in April signals the start of heavy-duty road and bridge work in District 8 and statewide. With that will come more driving safety messages through MoDOT’s Work Zone Awareness campaign.

MoDOT will urge drivers to slow down and stay alert, map out the trip, have alternate routes in mind and buckle up, said District 8 Emergency Response Coordinator Earl Wallace.

“It’s all about speed, it’s all about planning and it’s all about paying attention,” Wallace said.

To provide advanced warning of work zones, MoDOT will keep improving its use of message boards, the Internet, news media and Customer Service.

Safety will continue to be emphasized to employees, said Assistant District Engineer Matt Seiler. “They need to always be aware that anything can happen. Always have an escape plan and look out for each other.”

“Talkin’ Transportation”
Call-In Radio Show

KWTO 560 AM, Springfield
10-10:50 a.m. Wednesdays
radiospringfield.com

for more info

Community Relations Manager
Phone
E-mail

3025 E. Kearney
P.O. Box 868
Springfield, MO 65801

Bob Edwards
417.895.7713
robert.edwards@modot.mo.gov

D9

South Central

Several Projects Under way as Work Zone Awareness Week is Observed

Work Zone Awareness Week is simply a reminder of what we, as employees of MoDOT, and the traveling public should already be doing – exercising caution in work zones. Warmer than normal temperatures were welcome after a challenging winter and have allowed for a good jump-start on the construction season.

Clean up continues in several counties, especially along Interstate 44, from the January ice storm. Volumes of limbs and debris were left after the thaw and crews have been working diligently to clear first the roads and now the right-of-way of these nuisances. Maintenance Engineer Henry Haggard said his crews are committed to this effort.

In addition, regular maintenance activities are underway. Edge ruts, sign work and post-winter pavement issues are among the items topping the to-do list. These too require moving operations and work zones to get the job done. Construction also is contributing to the work on South Central roadways.

Installation of median guard cable has been underway for some time now and the section between Route 5 in Lebanon and Route E in Rolla is expected to be complete this month.

The Route 21 Washington County project to replace the bridge over Old Mines Creek began in January and is expected to be complete in August 2007. This work was necessary due to the poor condition of the previous structure and is expected to reduce the high rate of accidents in that area.

March brought the start of a long-awaited intersection reconfiguration on Route 63 and Business Route 60 in Cabool. The y-type intersection will be reconfigured to better accommodate higher traffic volumes and reshoulder and resurfacing are planned. Closure of the commuter lot next to the intersection and brief road closures with detours will be necessary. All work is expected to be complete by the fall.

Finally, the Route 60 gap between Van Buren and Willow Springs is taking shape. Much of the right of way needed to complete the four laning of that facility has been obtained and construction on the first phase, Mountain View to Willow Springs, is expected to begin this month.

All of this adds up to reinforcing the importance of slowing down, paying attention, obeying warning signs and exercising caution – all the things important to safely traveling through a work zone. This year, as in years past, these messages will be heavily communicated to employees and the public in an effort to keep everyone safe.



Crews from the Willow Springs Region work inside a lane drop while performing crack sealing work on Route 60/63 in Howell County.

Good Deed Recognized with Meritorious Safety Award

In the March issue of *Connections*, a feature on South Central District Design Technician Steve Belcher and his actions to assist a car crash victim

was published. Since that time, Steve's actions have earned him additional recognition.

During the Feb. 27 South Central District Employee Fair, District Engineer Tom Stehn called Risk Management Director Beth Ring to the

front for a special presentation. Tom read the *Connections* article, which detailed Steve's story. As his peers turned to see his reaction, Steve was asked to join Tom and Beth.

The pair presented him with a Meritorious Safety Award. This award, according to Beth, is designed to recognize an employee's actions during an emergency or life-threatening event and is the highest safety award offered by MoDOT.

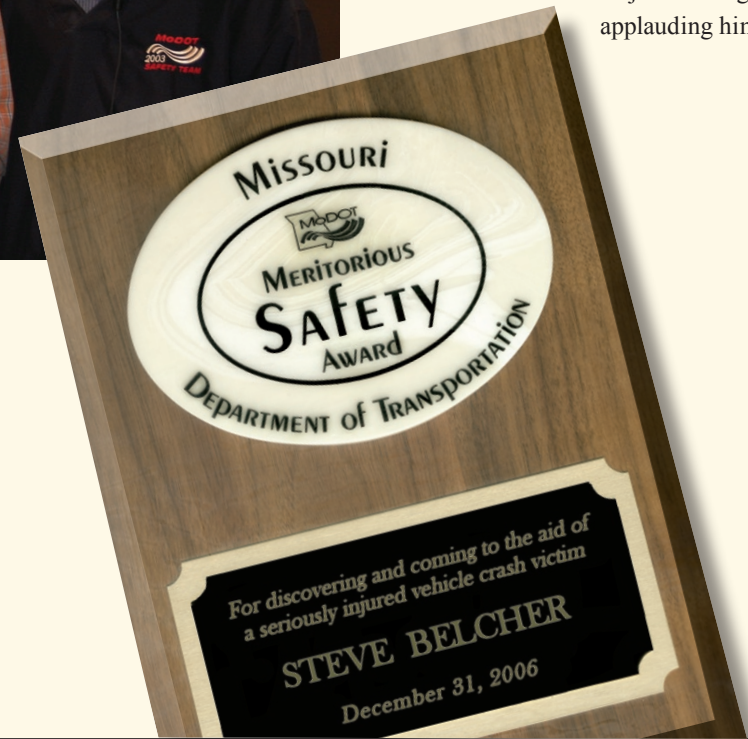
Steve was humbled by the presentation. Tom thanked him for his efforts and joined the group in applauding him.



District Engineer Tom Stehn, Design Technician Steve Belcher and Risk Management Director Beth Ring

for more info

Community Relations Manager	Ann Marie Newberry
Phone	417.469.6203
E-mail	ann.newberry@modot.mo.gov
910 Old Springfield Road	
P.O. Box 220	
Willow Springs, MO 65793	



D10

Southeast

New Sign Covers Make Work Zones Safer in Southeast District

by Belinda McMurry

We have all seen them...work zone signs covered with everything from plywood to newspaper. Something has to cover the signs, right?

When permanent signs are not appropriate to the work zone, or vice versa, the signs either have to be taken down or covered to eliminate confusion to drivers and to keep our work zones safe. With no consistent way of covering road signs by MoDOT or contractors statewide, methods have been less than ideal at times.

According to Scott Stotlemeyer, traffic liaison engineer, these less than desirable situations have resulted in poor work zone audit and work zone visibility inspection ratings across the state.

Plywood, plastic bags, cardboard and newspaper are all materials that have been used to cover signs in various work zones. Although these materials affixed to road signs can, at times, serve their intended purpose, they also have the potential to cause problems.

Some materials that are used may be too small, or sometimes too big for the road sign. Some items can damage the sign face and the reflective sheeting, and then some materials do not stay in place properly. In addition, the time and effort it takes to put the material up on the signs, as well as taking it down, is burdensome. All of these concerns can lead to possible work zone hazards.

So is there one solution to end all these

potential problems while maximizing work zone safety?

District 10 is currently trying to find more effective ways of covering road signs in work zones. The district is currently piloting a product called Sign Socks™.

Sign Socks™, similar to other comparable products, are constructed of a UV-treated, lightweight polypropylene fabric and made to slip over road signs with ease. Straps are attached to the “tarp-like” part of the Sign Sock™, which are then used to tie the cover securely to the road sign. In addition, Sign Socks™ can be attached to a road sign by one person without the use of tools or ladders. The covers allow for a clean and uniform



The new Sign Socks™ (above) are currently being used on Interstate 57 near Charleston as part of a pilot project. Older methods used across the state to cover road signs (above, left) may soon be replaced with the Sign Socks™, or a similar product.

look, helping to decrease confusion in work zones.

“The sign covers we’re experimenting with eliminate many work zone safety hazards,” said Stotlemeyer. “If experimentation goes well, we hope to offer this concept as a best practice to the construction industry and offer the devices internally through the annual bid process.”

Remembering the Past

by Angela Thomason

During the last week of February, Hoyt Kyle, District 10 right of way retiree, visited the district office to deliver a special gift, a hand-made wooden dump truck.

The pearly ash, walnut and beechwood dump truck has special meaning because the wood came from trees that were located where the old district office was located at the corner of Main Street and Malone in Sikeston. Kyle retired in June 1999 and the current office opened in September 1999.

“I wanted people to have a way to remember the memories from the old office. I thought making a truck from the trees at the old office would be a good way to bring back those memories,” Kyle said.

The truck is an exact replica of the MoDOT trucks used throughout the



Retiree Hoyt Kyle (right) presents a hand-made gift to District Engineer Mark Shelton.

state. All the details are accounted for, including the wooden steering wheel and the fuel tank; there is even a MoDOT logo on each of the doors.

Recent Retirement



Billy Joe White retired March 1 after 13 years with MoDOT. He was a senior maintenance worker in Park Hills.

District Holds Battle of the Belt Award Ceremonies

by Belinda McMurry

Two area high schools in District 10 have led the way in seat belt safety by confronting the challenge set by the statewide Battle of the Belt competition.

Out of the 100 schools that competed statewide, 20 southeast Missouri schools participated, with Notre Dame Regional High School and Hayti High School topping the District 10 regional charts.

Notre Dame Regional High School, in Cape County, won the regional award for the highest safety belt usage overall, reporting 96 percent seat belt usage. Notre Dame’s Students Against Destructive Decisions group, along with SADD Moderator Angela Schaefer, had many events to help convince their student population to buckle-up; from putting up posters and producing several public service announcements to giving out prizes for wearing safety belts, Notre Dame students made an impact.

“By convincing even a small number of students to buckle up, we have possibly helped save some lives,” said Schaefer.



Notre Dame Regional High School (above) and Hayti High School (below) are both awarded \$250 for their regional Battle of the Belt accomplishments. Advocates for the Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety presented the checks during recent ceremonies at the schools.



Hayti High School, in Pemiscot County, won the regional award for the greatest percentage increase in safety belt usage by the end of the competition. Hayti increased from four percent buckling-up at the beginning of the competition, to 49 percent only six weeks later.

According to Hayti High School’s Battle of the Belt Coordinator Alberta Cooper, their students also held many activities to promote the

challenge, including holding poster contests, hosting assemblies, developing brochures and much more.

“I’m very proud of our Battle of the Belt Team,” said Cooper. “All of their hard work paid off.”

Both schools were awarded \$250 for their Battle of the Belt accomplishments during ceremonies held on March 2.

for more info

Community Relations Manager Angie Wilson
Phone 573.472.6632
E-mail angela.wilson@modot.mo.gov

2675 N. Main Street
P.O. Box 160
Sikeston, MO 63801

Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

Community Relations
Missouri Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 270
Jefferson City, MO 65102
573.751.2840
www.modot.org
1-888 ASK MODOT

Editor
Kristi Jamison

Design Coordinator
Dennis Forbis

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Kristi Jamison, editor
573.526.2482
Kristine.Jamison@modot.mo.gov

Additional copies are available upon request. Suggestions, questions and comments are always welcome.



Please share this publication and recycle it after reading.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.



Missouri Department of Transportation
Community Relations
105 W. Capitol Avenue
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Return Service Requested

PreSort
Standard
Permit #210
Sedalia, MO
65301

Where Are Missouri Work Zones?

Missouri's new 2007 statewide construction map, now available on www.modot.org, will provide details about work zones on major roadways and hopefully minimize delays and frustrations for motorists.

The map will provide project details and indicate whether the work will occur during the daytime, nighttime or

both day and night. The map will also show what work is a part of the Better Roads, Brighter Future program, which will improve the remainder of the state's 5,600 miles of major highways by the end of 2011.

This is the second year that MoDOT has offered the statewide construction map online after a lot of positive feedback from last year's map.

"Last year's map was a big hit and really improved travel for motorists who planned ahead for their trips," said Don Hillis, director of System Management. "This year is another big year for construction, so we again urge motorists to check out the 2007 construction map before they head out on the roadways."

The statewide construction map is just one of many things that MoDOT is doing to make traveling Missouri roadways easier and safer during the 2007 construction season.

Hard copies of the statewide construction map are available by calling MoDOT's toll-free number, 888-ASK-MoDOT.



Work Zone Safety Projects in the STIP

by Sue Cox

There's an old adage you've probably heard before – Put your money where your mouth is! And when it comes to safety – both for MoDOT workers in a work zone and travelers passing through the work zones – MoDOT is walking the talk. As this construction season unfolds, money for helping ensure safer work zones is part of the game plan.

The department's five-year construction program, called the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, or STIP, is providing funds for city, county and state law enforcement officers to monitor work zones and help slow traffic.

"We know that having a law enforcement presence in a work zone is a deterrent – it makes people slow down," said Bill Whitfield, senior systems management specialist in MoDOT's Highway Safety Division. "Active enforcement that includes writing tickets and imposing fines causes a reaction, which is to slow down and more carefully pass through the work zone."

"This is the first construction season we've been able to provide these safety



funds and assist the districts in identifying the projects for the special work zones' support," said Todd Miller, programming engineer in the Transportation Planning Division. Both Whitfield and Miller worked with the districts' planners, area engineers and resident engineers to identify the construction projects for the work zone enforcement, to prepare estimates for the enforcement services and to arrange schedules with the law enforcement agencies.

As MoDOT evaluates the success of these safety efforts, Miller expects that more projects will be programmed in next year's construction program. "We have a responsibility to MoDOT workers and Missouri travelers to do what we can to make traveling in work zones safe," he said. "We value safety at MoDOT, and we're looking for innovative methods to help make that happen."



MoDOT employees, Gateway Constructors and local elected officials marked the start of construction on the new I-64 project at a March 19 ground-breaking ceremony. The event was in Richmond Heights at the northeast corner of the Interstate 64 and Interstate 170 interchange.

Cathy Morrison